

Arsenal Office Building Still In Planning Stage

By ROBERT W. RICHARDS

Washington, Sept. 26. (Copley Press Leased Wire)—An ordnance department office building, about which Joliet, Ill., has been hearing rumors for several weeks, is still in the tentative planning stage, according to the department of the army.

It had been reported that a new structure, capable of housing upwards of 1,800 clerks to handle paper work for ordnance, might be located on land of the Joliet arsenal.

But the army said the suggested building "hasn't got out of the talking stage yet." No decision has been reached, a spokesman added, even to construct such a headquarters for ordnance.

The Pentagon has been busy with plans for decentralizing the defense branches, it was said, because Washington is regarded as a primary target in the event of an atomic attack on the United States.

President Truman sent to congress recommendations for the transfer of certain key functions of government to nearby Maryland and Virginia areas, out of range of potential atom bomb strikes at the capital.

The White House proposals for dispersal of strategic defense functions, including communications, included no plan for moving congress elsewhere.

Reaction on Capitol Hill was cool to the presidential suggestions as "incomplete" and funds asked for scattering other federal activities across the country were not approved.

ONE PENTAGON source thought a lack of appropriations would defer the ordnance office building for some time. But an ordnance official said plans for the clerical center hadn't progressed "to the money stage" and doubted that refusal of congress to provide the money for Mr. Truman's outline for decentralization have "anything to do with it."

"Nothing has jelled yet and it may be a long time before it does," he commented on the Joliet report.